

Fact Sheet

Hamilton-Labree Superfund Site
Chehalis, Washington

November 2001

Work to Begin in Late 2001

This winter, detailed studies of contamination at the Hamilton-Labree Superfund Site will begin. These studies are needed to design a final cleanup plan for the site, which was listed on EPA's Superfund National Priorities List in July 2000. On October 31, 2001, EPA and the S. C. Breen Construction Company, a potentially responsible party for the site, signed an Administrative Order on Consent. In accordance with the Order, Breen will conduct a comprehensive investigation and evaluation of cleanup alternatives under EPA oversight. This investigation is called a "Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study" (RI/FS).

At this time, no other potentially responsible parties have been identified. However, EPA may identify others as new information becomes available.

First Steps in the Long-Term Cleanup to Begin

This winter, the Breen company will begin installing some additional monitoring wells at the site and will collect groundwater samples from both new and existing wells, including drinking water wells. Some community members may be asked to grant access to Breen and its contractor, Farallon Consulting, for sampling. This sampling will better define how far the contamination extends, and help develop options for cleanup. EPA will keep the community informed of sampling results. After the initial investigation is completed, EPA will evaluate cleanup alternatives and a cleanup approach will be proposed.

What is the RI/FS Process? (Side "Info" Box)

Before a site can be cleaned up, it is important to identify where the contamination is and what risks it may pose to human health and the environment.

The "Remedial Investigation" (RI), will address questions like:

- S** What is the extent and source(s) of the contamination found at the site?
- S** What is the direction of groundwater flow in the area and what factors affect the flow?
- S** How far does the contaminated groundwater plume extend and is it expanding?
- S** How does groundwater flow affect the concentration and distribution of the contaminant plume?
- S** What cleanup option(s) would best control or minimize this contamination?

The Risk Assessment looks at potential health risks to people and the environment. It is part of the RI, and will address:

- S** What kinds of health concerns might people encounter if they use contaminated water at or near the site? (This includes drinking, bathing in, or watering lawns and gardens with contaminated water).
- S** Could people be at risk from breathing perchloroethylene (PCE) that might vaporize from

- groundwater into their homes?
- S What sorts of risks may be posed to fish, other animals, and the environment?

Once site information is gathered, EPA will evaluate various cleanup options using criteria that include overall protection of human health and the environment, cost, and community acceptance. This part of the process is called the “Feasibility Study.” EPA will choose a cleanup option based on weighing the above criteria. A public comment period and hearing will be held at this point.

New Water Line Will Be Installed For Affected Well Owners

Next summer, EPA will begin to install a new water line to homes and businesses affected by PCE-contaminated groundwater from the site. This water line will provide clean, safe water for domestic use. EPA is planning to finish installing it in October 2002, and will continue to provide bottled water to those residences and businesses that have been receiving it until hookup is completed. EPA met with these well owners in September 2001 to discuss the project and listen to concerns and suggestions. We began property surveys in late October to help us design the new waterline. EPA is working with the city of Chehalis and Lewis County to install the water line. It will extend from a city water line on the east side of Interstate 5 to the affected homes and businesses. If, in the future, PCE associated with the site is discovered at unsafe levels in other wells in the area, EPA will ensure that affected well owners receive safe water.

Tests to Verify Extent of Contamination are Underway

EPA has also requested access from other property owners in the area to test their wells for PCE. We are doing this because previous tests have indicated that the contaminated groundwater plume from the Hamilton/Labree site may be gradually moving northwest, and could affect these other wells. This is part of the ongoing cleanup investigation and is essential for determining if installing the new water line to these additional properties is warranted.

Well sampling began in late October. EPA’s only purposes for accessing private property at this time are to obtain water samples from wells in the area, and do the surveying necessary to design a water distribution system.

We will hold a public meeting to communicate the results as soon as they are available, and will continue to keep the community closely informed as this project continues.

Questions or Concerns?

Below are some details about the new water line project. If you have issues or concerns about this project, please call Debra Sherbina at 1-800-424-4372, extension 0247; e-mail: sherbina.debra@epa.gov. You can also mail your comments to Debra Sherbina, EPA Region 10, 1200 Sixth Avenue, ECO-081, Seattle, Washington 98101.

Additional Details for Properties that Need the New Water Line

- S EPA will cover all costs for installing the water line to affected wells, including the cost of the water meter and the city’s “hook up” fee. The residents will be responsible for paying future water bills to the city of Chehalis. The average bill for a residence outside the city limits is about \$35 per month.
- S If any owners of affected wells choose not to hook up to the new water line at this time,

- they will be responsible for paying for hookup costs if they decide to receive water from the new line in the future.
- S EPA will disconnect all contaminated wells from affected houses and businesses as they are being hooked up to the new water line in order to prevent cross-contamination of the new line. At this time, owners of affected wells may still use them for watering their lawns and gardens. In addition, EPA needs to keep access to the wells to continue gathering samples for the long-term cleanup.
 - S As we learn more about the contamination and develop final cleanup plans for the site, it is possible that private wells will need to be permanently closed to protect residents' health or to stop movement of the contaminants in the groundwater plume. In this case, EPA would work with each property owner regarding well closure.
 - S EPA will stop supplying bottled water when the new water line is completed, since the new water line is intended to provide a permanent, safe water source.
 - S The city of Chehalis will take over operating and maintaining the water line after EPA builds it and it is approved by the city.

About Perchloroethylene (PCE)

PCE is a chemical commonly used in metal degreasing and cleaning operations, dry cleaning, and other industrial activities. It belongs to a family of chemicals known as "volatile organic compounds" which move easily through the environment and may be harmful to people who are exposed to them. Potential health problems from exposure depend on a variety of things, including how the chemical entered the body, how long and how often a person has been exposed, and how sensitive a person is to its effect. PCE can cause cancer in humans. For more detailed information on the potential long- and short-term health effects of PCE, go to the following link from the Agency for Toxic Substances and Diseases Registry (ATSDR) web page:
<http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/tfacts18.html>

Site Background

The Hamilton-Labree site is the property near the intersection of Hamilton and Labree Roads. It is about three miles south of Chehalis, Washington, along Interstate 5. An aquifer system, which includes a shallow and a deep aquifer, is underneath the site. The shallow aquifer supplies drinking water to local residents and businesses, and is separated from the deep aquifer by approximately 100 feet of clay. There are a total of 252 drinking water wells which receive water from the shallow aquifer, as well as three public supply wells which serve approximately 1,256 people. All of these wells are within three to four miles from the intersection of Hamilton and Labree Roads. However, contaminants have been found in only ten wells to date.

In 1993, the Lewis County Department of Health discovered perchloroethylene (PCE) in the groundwater. As a result, the Washington Department of Health took samples, confirming PCE exists in the shallow aquifer. At this time, the county health department advised owners of the contaminated wells to use an alternate water supply for drinking and cooking. The Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology) provided bottled water to these well owners. EPA has since taken over supplying bottled water. Ecology and EPA continue to monitor the area.

In the summer of 2000, EPA collected soil and groundwater samples to locate the source and extent of the contamination associated with the area south of Hamilton Road (the "Hamilton Road

impact area”). The sampling confirmed high levels of PCE west of Interstate 5, across Hamilton Road from the United Rentals property. This source west of I-5 is contributing to the groundwater contaminant plume. EPA plans to address or clean up this source and any other significant sources of PCE contamination that are discovered during the RI/FS.

Contact Information

If you have technical questions about the site or the long-term cleanup, please contact:

Sally Thomas, Project Manager

at **(360) 753-2102**

E-mail: thomas.sally@epa.gov

If you have technical questions about the new water line project, please call:

Bill Longston, On-Scene Coordinator

at **(206) 553-1679**

E-mail: longston.william@epa.gov

For questions about how to get more information on the site or become involved, please call:

Debra Sherbina, Community Involvement Coordinator

at **(206) 553-0247**

E-mail: sherbina.debra@epa.gov

You may also reach us through our toll free number: **1-800-424-4372**

Introducing Bob Kievit, New Project Manager

In November 2001, Bob Kievit became the new Project Manager for the Hamilton/Labree Site.

He can be reached at (360) 753-9014; e-mail: kievit.bob@epa.gov

EPA's Contractor:

Ecology and Environment, Inc.

The PRP's Contractor:

Farallon Consulting

EPA's Internet homepage: **<http://www.epa.gov/r10earth>**

A website has been developed for the Hamilton/Labree site. You can find the Administrative Order on Consent and other site information by accessing the Region 10 web page at www.epa.gov/r10earth, and clicking on “Index,” then “H.”

To ensure effective communication with everyone, additional services can be made available to persons with disabilities by contacting one of the numbers above.